

EXHIBIT MM

From: LYNNE FREEMAN <lynnef@gci.net>
Sent: September 11, 2016 10:00 PM
To: Michael Garner
Subject: Re: On Writing

Hi Mike -

I wanted to send a quick email and let you know how much what you said is resonating with me. Why we write. Yes, I write for all of the reasons you listed for yourself :) The idea of creating an emotional sanctuary for the reader, a world where I want to belong - where I do belong --and where the reader feels the same way, is magic. And it is compelling.

I feel the same about Hogwarts. I adore Rowling for creating that world. I remember reading the first Harry Potter book and laughing out loud at the absurdity of Harry's life with the horrid Dursleys or whatever their names are. I imagine myself at Hogwarts. Who I'd be, what I'd do.

And that's really it, isn't it -- the magic of creating these worlds, these havens, for ourselves and our readers.

Okay, my email is getting long. I'm reading Masqued again this week and sending it to a guy named William Greenleaf. "Bill" charges \$285 to read your book and give you feedback. He's a writing Prof in New Mexico, I think, and is a published author of sci-fi books. I like him. I've worked with him before on a book a few years ago (the \$285 read) and have a friend doing a more in-depth read and review with him now. She loves him.

After I've gotten any kinks worked out, I would love for you to be the first reader of the finished product before I shop it.

:)

Off to Rivendell--

----- Original Message -----

From: "Michael Garner" <michael@michaelgarner.net>

To: "LYNNE FREEMAN" <lynnef@gci.net>
Cc:

Sent: Tue, 6 Sep 2016 15:11:04 -0600
Subject: Re: On Writing

Hi Lynne,

Thanks for your encouragement.

I've pressed on and am making progress. I think I get discouraged sometimes because I can't wave a magic wand and have the book just DONE. "What?" some unconscious part of me says, "you mean I've got to WORK at this???"

As for why are you bothering to write... First let me say that I think you should keep doing it because you're good at it. I won't belabor this point beyond saying that writing isn't very much about how beautiful your words are, but rather how lovable your characters are. And I think you're doing just fine on both accounts my friend, so I think you should keep writing. Exercise your potential.

Second... For me, the question of "why should I keep writing?" really swings the searchlight of my consciousness back into myself, and in a way that's not super comfortable. I keep writing because it's just something I've always done, and something that I've always come back to, and something I expect that I'll continue to do. And in that sense, my answer to your question is tautological. I just keep saying the same thing over and over. "Why do you write?" "Because." "Why?" "Because."

You didn't ask me to share when you asked your question, so I won't go very deep into this. But I will a little, because maybe it'll be useful for you.

I want my writing to mean something. I want it to make people feel something positive, like hope. I think when I sift through all my reasons for writing and discard the B.S., that answer is the final one on the table. And it's not that I want OTHER people to feel hope, it's that I want to.

So I think I write because I want to feel hope. And my (ahem) hope is that other people will feel that too.

There's real magic is the written word. I doubt I could count how many times I've read something that helped me take my eyes off whatever trouble was plaguing me at that moment. How many times have I read something and felt that it was more emotionally significant than what I was actually facing? And the power of that is how it can lighten my heart when I return to deal with the real world. The power of writing is that it temporarily refocuses my emotions from an actual trouble to an imagined one, and then provides a resolution (good or bad) to that imaginary trouble.

I watched a Harry Potter movie last night, and I was struck yet again by how at home I felt at Hogwarts, and how much I felt a sense of belonging there. I'm not a superfan of Harry Potter by any means. But Rowling created a world that made me feel at home there, and one from which I somehow got a sense of belonging.

That is magic.

And it's possible for you and me to create that. It's possible for us to create an emotional sanctuary for our readers, and by the act, give ourselves the same sense of separation from our actual difficulties.



So that's why I write.

And to bring the focus back to you, I know you have that power to create magic because of how I wound up feeling about Ella, especially in the troubles she has with her mom. You captured a truth there, Lynne — you touched a current of longing and you gave me hope that there was a way for it to be fulfilled. You showed me myself in Ella, and that was enough to cause me to hope that she could satisfy her need. What I want for her is in truth what I want for myself.

So why do you write? I don't know. But I hope you keep doing it, because I've seen magic in your words.

Your pal,
Mike

On Aug 31, 2016, at 3:52 PM, LYNNE FREEMAN <lynnef@gci.net> wrote:

Hi Mike -

[REDACTED] t

I think you were very articulate below. Yes, book and story evolved as I did. Perspective of that river changes all the time. Such is life.

Now looking at what you wrote about your project, I'll bet you're out of your slow phase, right? That thing of questioning what we do is sooo frustrating. Don't worry about giving your viewer the magnifying glass. Write with confidence and belief in what you're doing. Write with the intention that you are doing exactly what you are supposed to do to tell this story. It's hard to hang on to that. I know better than anyone. That self-doubt is what caused me to fall off the wagon for so long.

You're worried that your reader may feel forced to wade through the story -- has anyone read what you've written so far? My advice is to push forward my friend. Push forward and get it done. Then go back and take a look. Get feedback when you're ready. I believe there may be a danger in stopping mid-stream. And what if you find out that you have given too much detail? Well so what! If you worry about that now, it might choke your writing. And when you're done and let's say you find it's too detailed, it's pretty easy to go back and dilute.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

So. My advice to both of us: stay the course. Stay true. Don't falter.

Write.

Lynne :)

----- Original Message -----

From:

"Michael Garner" <michael@michaelgarner.net>

To:

"LYNNE FREEMAN" <lynnef@gci.net>

Cc:

Sent:

Tue, 23 Aug 2016 16:34:28 -0600

Subject:

Re: On Writing

Hi Lynne,

That's great advice about being stuck with your story. I'll tuck that one away in my toolkit.

I think it's interesting how your story evolved over time. It's kind of pretty in a way that it did. And I mean "pretty" as in "one of the things that make life worth living." It's like you were changing as a person and as an author, so your expression of that essential story had to change too. But on the other hand, the core of your Self didn't change, and IT wanted to express something. I'm not articulating this well. I think what I mean is that the river you saw yesterday is not the same one you see today, nor is it the one you'll see tomorrow. The WATERCOURSE is the same, but the water running down it is always different. And that's not only pretty once, it's pretty almost every time you look at it. I'm tripping all over myself here, so I'm going to stop. I just think it's cool that the form of your story changed over time, but your need to tell it didn't.

My project is moving along, some days faster, some slower. I'm in a slow phase right now, mostly because I'm questioning my storytelling style. For the past few days I've been worried that I'm asking the viewer to look at a landscape with a magnifying glass... that I'm giving a ton of detail that isn't necessary to understand the whole plot. I'm worried that because I don't have a very good outline — only a general sense of the events that happen in each act of the story — I'm forcing my reader to wade through the story instead of sailing through it because that's what I'M doing. I keep telling myself I can go back and fix it in the revision phase, but honestly Lynne, I am SO ready to make money from this activity that I just want to self-publish it the second I'm done.

Sigh.

The life of a writer.

I hope you're doing well. Let me know when you're ready to have me read your final product!

Mike

On Aug 18, 2016, at 7:03 PM, LYNNE FREEMAN <lynnef@gci.net> wrote:

Hi Mike -

I couldn't really talk yesterday. Crazy day. Boys in the car, lots of laughter, and had just finished a call with another attorney on a case I'm doing.

How satisfied am I with the results? Pretty satisfied I'd say. This book has been an albatross around my neck. I figure I've written 5 iterations of the story. This last one is honestly a completely new book. Not the original in any way. And that's been part of my frustration in writing it. I've wanted to keep to the original and it just couldn't happen. Not with the characters and not with the story.

I kept getting stuck on chapter 11. I could not write past the scene where Ella meets the High Priestess. First, I thought it was because Rachel was in the preceding chapter and shouldn't have been there. I love love her! But she didn't belong with Brendan going to Avalon etc. She needed to come in as a character helping the group later on.

Then I realized that I couldn't write past the High Priestess scene with Ella back at school because this story has romance and with the romantic lead missing from those few chapters, it felt stilted trying to pick him up again after

the big action. And this sucked because the original story largely built off the fact that Roman and Ella are MASKED from one another for most of the story. They are both kindred. He's of the Order -- her enemy. She's of the house of Set -- his enemy. And dammit all to hell anyway because the story just didn't work without a big reveal early on after Set takes her mom.

DAMN!

So I spent most of my summer digging around in chapter 11 :) I remember reading that when you get stuck it means you're forcing the story in a way it's not meant to go. And that's why you get stuck. The idea is to go back and see where you lost the thread of the story you were weaving and pull out the stitches that led you astray. That's what I had to do. And I resisted for the longest time.

In the end, I feel good about the story. It's not the one I set out to write but I like it. And I'd read it. So that's all to the good in my way of thinking about it :)

I will pick it back up after school starts mid-September for a final read and edit and then send to you. I'm not touching the darn thing until then. It is D O N E. YAY! Then I can craft a query and go about agenting. Again. Ha!

Now, on to your project. So impressed that you are getting this one done so quickly. Do you think it's going more quickly because you're more interested in the subject matter? It sounds like you're having fun with it. Can't wait to READ what you're writing.

Lynne

----- Original Message -----

From:

"Michael Garner" <michael@michaelgarner.net>

To:

"LYNNE FREEMAN" <lynnef@gci.net>

Cc:

Sent:

Wed, 17 Aug 2016 15:47:18 -0600

Subject:

Re: On Writing

What?!? CONGRATULATIONS!!! I am SO happy to hear you finished, and I am SO proud of you for doing it! YAY Lynne!!! That is a wonderful, wonderful accomplishment! You've been working so hard on it for so long. Congratulations, my friend!

How satisfied are you with the results? I know this book was very personal for you, so I have to ask that. How do you feel about what you've done???

Now, send it to me immediately!!! I have to find out what happens to poor little Ella!

I'm so excited for you! Seriously, send it to me! I'm only about 15 pages into a book I read about 20 years ago and I'd be only too happy to put it down for bit to find out what happens in Masqued I promise I won't say anything about it until you ask me to. I just want to find out what happens to her. I feel like there's at least two-thirds of your story that I don't know

enough about, and that I've only ever heard hints of, so I really want to find out what happens in black and white.

Conspiracy theory is definitely a vortex of fascination. I think your friend is surfing on that wave and I can see how it would provide endless inspiration for stories. I'm looking forward to hearing about your project, and to reading what it becomes.

My own project is moving along steadily. I hit 30K words yesterday I think, and I'm firmly in Act 2. I can see the shape of what happens for the rest of the book even if I don't know the exact details yet, but like I said (and knock on wood), it's moving steadily along. I doubt I'll finish by my original goal date of 9/9 — that's only 23 days away (can you believe it?) — but I'll be satisfied to get it done before Thanksgiving, which I think I can do. That's still a pretty good turnaround for a novel — if I finish by Thanksgiving, that just about 6 months from the day I started. I can live with that.

I'm sorry I've been so lousy about writing lately. I'll get better.

Now stop reading this and send me Masqued!!! :-)

Talk to you soon.

Mike

On Aug 17, 2016, at 8:46 AM, LYNNE FREEMAN <lynnef@gci.net> wrote:

Hi Mike -

Masqued is a fait accompli (gawsh I hope I spelled that right for all the years of French I've had). Yay me! I've set it aside to read in September after school starts as we are madly dashing here and there on vacation. And yes, there is a flight involved but I won't say anything about it until it's a fait accompli...

I'm excited about the conspiracy theory novel I'm writing next, but still in the planning stages on that one. Can't decide if it's YA or adult fiction but not important right now. One of my friends here in SB is an aspiring novelist (rock star's former wife --we do have the most interesting conversations. If only I could persuade her to write THAT story OMG) and she's a great source. She combs the internet for those websites and has introduced me to some very interesting theories. ie I had no idea there is a whole "the earth is flat" conspiracy theory, and that we are really living on ringed worlds created by aliens etc. I have a feeling my next novel is going to be sooo much fun :)

Hope your current project is going well and that the words are falling from your mind to your fingertips with great ease.

L.

